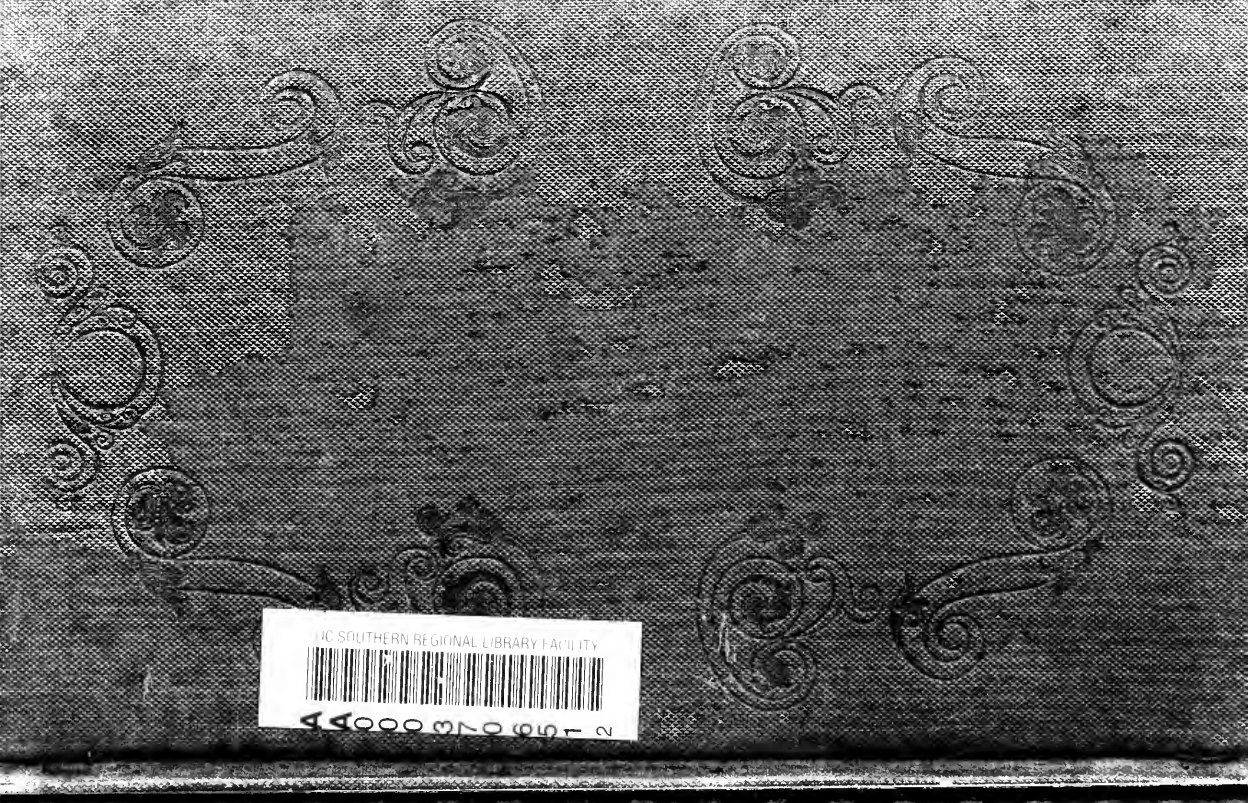
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POMPEII,

A Didactic Poem;

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

POEMS ON THE NIOBE

AND

THE TEMPLE OF THESEUS;

(As approved by the "Cheltenham Literary and Philosophical Society.")

WITH OTHERS, NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

BY THE REV. S. MIDDLETON, B.D.,
LATE RECTOR OF STRATTON, NORFOLK.

"All imaginable delights were here in constant rivalry."
PLINY *on Campania.*
"Divum inclementia Divum has evertet Opes."—VIRGIL.

SECOND EDITION.

CHELTENHAM:
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM WIGHT,
AT HIS THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY:
SOLD IN LONDON, BY SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.;
AND JAMES NISBET & CO.
M DCCC XXXVIII.

MACINTOSH, PRINTER,
GREAT NEW STREET, LONDON.

PR
5021
M379p
1838

DEDICATION.

SECOND EDITION.

TO THE REVEREND

PHILIP NICHOLAS SHUTTLEWORTH, D.D.,

WARDEN OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD,

&c., &c., &c.

My dear Sir,

In soliciting permission to dedicate this little Volume to you, though duly sensible of the importance it must acquire from a name so distinguished by station and authorship, I am not less actuated by sincere gratitude for the consideration and kindness I have been honoured with at your hands, and which has led me, while I looked up with

867100

just admiration to the man of letters, to cherish a warm affection for the gentleman, and, I would fain add, the Friend.

These, Sir, I know are general sentiments respecting you, and feeling such, with a heartfelt wish that every blessing, consistent with humanity, may long attend you and yours,

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Your obliged and very humble Servant,

STEPHEN MIDDLETON.

PREFACE.

SECOND EDITION.

In days when Poetry seems nearly excluded from the library,* it requires perhaps no little courage to launch even a small Volume on the literary ocean.

The favourable reception with which the First Edition was generally met, the almost if not only objection to the former description of Pompeii ("its brevity, or want of incident") the wish to remedy that defect, and the many requests, of perhaps partial friends, that it should be extended, must form the Author's apologies for this Second Edition. It is his desire, as it would be in what-

* The Author was lately informed by a respectable bookseller that for many years he had never sold one copy of the "British Poets," and scarcely a volume of them.

ever he writes, that its tendency may not be unbecoming the Christian minister, and though he has now been induced to give some pages to, a perhaps hackneyed subject, "Love," he yet trusts that to some mistaken persons even this may be morally beneficial, by showing its importance to man's happiness, and more especially by pointing out, what by many is too little considered, *the infinite difference between virtuous affection and criminal passion*, the former being probably next to a well-grounded faith, the most sure path to contentment on earth, while the latter conducts to certain wretchedness in both worlds. The minor Poems have been chiefly written at the request of, or to accompany drawings by, Friends.

Cheltenham, 1*st May*, 1838.

INTRODUCTION.

The Cities of Herculaneum, Stabiæ, and Pompeii, were situated in that district of Italy, named by the ancients "Campania," between the mountains of Samnium and the Tyrrhenean Sea—this line of coast is known in our days as the "Bay of Naples." At the bottom of this bay, about thirteen miles south-east of Naples, and five from Vesuvius, stood Pompeii—of its history very little is known. Campania has ever been celebrated as tempting, by its luxuriant riches, the invasion of strangers; and punishing the cupidity of its conquerors, by enervating and subjecting them in turn. Pompeii, being near the sea, united all the conveniences of a commercial town, with the security of a military station, and the romantic beauty of a spot celebrated for its pre-eminent loveliness. Its environs, even to the heights of Vesuvius, are said

to have been adorned with villas, and the whole coast, as far as Naples, to have been covered with gardens and villages. Multitudes of strangers, in search of health and recreation, resorted to this primeval "*Cheltenham of the Sea,*" and added new charms and animation to its delightful scenery.

These advantages were, however, dearly purchased: an enemy, at that time unknown, was silently working its destruction, and continues, from age to age, to desolate the modern towns, which stand on the buried cities of antiquity. Seneca records an earthquake to have taken place on the 16th February, A.D. 63, by which a considerable part of POMPEII was thrown down, and much injury sustained by HERCULANEUM. Vestiges of the injury done by this and subsequent shocks may be still seen in the houses excavated at POMPEII, where the mosaic floors are twisted and broken, and show the repairs which have been attempted.

On the 23d August, A.D. 79, the great, and first recorded volcanic paroxysm of Vesuvius took place, which overwhelmed, as in a moment, the

whole populous and delightful district; and buried in one vast and extensive grave, everything which there conduced to delight and embellish life—all that could charm the eye or astonish the imagination.

By an unusual good fortune, we are, even now, in possession of a narrative, by an eye-witness, of this dreadful catastrophe. It is contained in two letters written by Pliny, the younger, to Tacitus, relative to the death of his uncle, the elder Pliny, who perished on the occasion "suffocated by gross and noxious vapours." As these letters are generally known, I shall only trouble the reader with some short extracts:—He describes a cloud to have arisen from the neighbourhood of the mountain of unusual size and shape; its figure resembled "a huge pine-tree shooting up to a prodigious height, and extending itself at the top into numerous branches;" it was at some times bright, and at other times spotted, as more or less impregnated with earth and hot cinders; these cinders, which grew thicker and hotter, soon began to fall, together with pumice-stones and pieces of burning

rock. Soon after, the eruption from Vesuvius flamed out in several places with great violence, which rendered the darkness of the night more visible and awful—notwithstanding the return of day, a deeper darkness prevailed than in the most obscure night. In Pliny's second letter he more fully describes the tremendous awfulness of the surrounding scenes—" the people, pressing on our way, followed us out of the town in the utmost consternation and terror — the chariots were so agitated backwards and forwards that we could not keep them steady, even with large stones, and on level ground—the sea seemed to roll back on itself, and to be driven from its shores by the convulsive earth—the shore was much enlarged and many sea animals were left upon it—on the other side a black and dreadful cloud bursting with an igneous serpentine vapour, darted long trains of many-coloured fire, much larger than flashes of lightning—it covered the whole ocean, and entirely hid the island of Capreæ and the promontory of Misenum—the ashes now began to fall,—soon afterwards I observed a thick smoke rolling after us like a torrent—total darkness ensued. Nothing was to

be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of infants, and the cries of men; some calling for children, for parents, for husbands; and only distinguishing each other by their voices—lamentations and wishing to die, with invocations to the gods, were heard on all sides, all imagining that the last and eternal night of the world was come—every thing was covered with ashes as a deep snow." We find, from other records, that much matter was deposited in a liquid state—that the impenetrable darkness lasted three days—the ashes were thrown up in such quantity and violence as to have been carried even to the coasts of Africa, Bysantium, &c.

Having endeavoured to embody in the Poem, these, and other particulars such as are related by Sir William Gell, Hill, Adams, Kennett, and different historians, the author must still refer his readers to well-known authorities, for such information as does not fully appear in the notes —such as the fables of Amphion and Orpheus—the Marriage Procession, Feast and Customs—Dress of the Bride—the Sacrificial Procession and Rites—Street of Tombs—&c., &c., &c.

POMPEII.

Canto I.

Yes! all is still, save where the hollow ground
Yields a faint echo to the mattock's sound,
And where the workman, 'midst surrounding gloom,
Explores the relics of a City's tomb.
Spirit of olden Time, of days gone by,
Rise from these ashes on the Poet's eye!
Haste at my call! and with thee bring along
Truth to my voice, and music to my song;
From its deep shrine the latent scene renew,
Throw back the pall, and give the past to view.

O! for that voice, at whose inspiring tone [1]
Majestic Thebes sprang from unquarried stone!
O! for that lyre, at whose enchanting strain
Hell's grisly king relaxed his tyrant reign,
Confessed those sounds which mightiest gods control,
And gave the bard the idol of his soul. [2]
Then would my muse in worthy strain recal
What desolation swept Pompeii's wall;
And, spite of nature, would the story tell [3]
Whence her destruction came, and how her thousands fell.

Fair was the morn, and cheerful was the day;
Throng'd were her streets, and every heart was gay;
Crowds, blithe in health, inhaled the vernal air,
And jocund laugh and revelry were there.
E'en now, in thought, from Juno's hallow'd fane,
I see approach the mirth-attended train!
Auspicious rites bespeak the smiles of heaven, [4]
On solemn vows of nuptial pledges given:

The high-born maid, Campania's fairest boast,
Sought by each chief around the Tyrrhene coast,
Before Heaven's awful queen has pledged her truth [5]
To the loved object of her early youth;
Upon her steps the clustering thousands throng,
Welcome the scene, and swell the marriage song! [6]

"Hail! hail to the Chief whom the Fates have befriended
With gifts all transcendent of fortune and love;
Whose brow with the warrior's bright chaplet is blended;
Whose suit Heav'n's great Empress delights to approve!

"And hail to the Maiden whose beauty, demanding
The worship of men, may be ranked as divine;
Whose virtues, the homage of mortals commanding,
With all the rich charms of her person combine!

"Long, long may the vows so propitiously offered,
Unalloy'd by misfortune or falsehood remain;
And may the affection, now mutually proffered,
Shine brightly through life, free from cloud or from stain!

"O grant, ye just Gods! to their bridals benignant,
A race, like themselves, of the brave and the fair;
And turn from their pathway, with prowess indignant,
Each bane to their bliss, and the canker of care.

"Then, hail to the Chief whom the Fates have befriended
With gifts all transcendent of fortune and love;
Whose brow with the warrior's bright chaplet is blended;
Whose suit Heav'n's great Empress delights to approve."

Saw ye the Bride amidst that circling train,
Where warbling flutes breathe forth an amorous strain;
Where virgin ranks, in all the proud array
Of dazzling beauty, press upon her way?
Marked ye her step? her more than mortal grace?
Her eye of heaven? her hope-illumin'd face?—
Around her brow the blooming chaplet glowed, [7]
And down her graceful form the flammeum flowed, [8]
The tunic's softest fold her limbs embraced, [9]
And the pure girdle clasped her slender waist;
Gaze of admiring multitudes she moved,
Propp'd by the manly arm of him she loved!

Alas, fair maid! e'en like yon solar ray,
Thy brief, delusive transports fade away;
Those spear-divided locks, those eyes of light, [10]
Heaven's flattering smiles, and each propitious rite,
All, all are vain, themselves or thee to save
From the dark horrors of an instant grave;

For lo! with solemn pace, yon lurid cloud
O'er the blue heaven extends its leaden shroud;
Pernicious gales sulphureous tempests bring,
And certain havoc rides upon their wing.

The bridal throng hath passed on homeward way,
And, as progressive hours lead on the day,
Increasing heat and darker shades arise,
'Till a dim curtain seems to veil the skies;
Meanwhile, a thousand eyes explore the cause—
A violation of fair Nature's laws,
And shuddering breasts e'en now anticipate
Some dread convulsion of impending fate.

Alas! what cause impels the wavy throng,
Glares in each eye, and drives the crowds along?
What sudden horror, by each act confessed,
Nerves every arm, and maddens every breast?
Darkness has spread around!—an awful gloom,
Hopeless and deep, as of some boundless tomb,

Seals up the anxious sight, and o'er the soul
Throws the strong fetters of its dire control!
Meanwhile, the shrieks of frantic wives resound,
Whose screaming infants echo back the sound,
While husbands, wildly rushing through the press,
Fold their loved offspring in a last caress.
Still, still yon mountain cloud ascends on high,
Spreads shade on shade, and drives along the sky;
In form a giant pine, the deluge came, [12]
Its trunk all blackness, and each branch a flame;
Its fires assuming, to the shrinking view,
Now the fierce glare, and now a dying hue!
Dark, rapid, burning, in its torrent force,
Each moment shifting, onward still its course,
Fragments of heated stone it vomits round,
And floods of whelming ashes veil the ground!
The falling masses burst the sacred fanes,
And o'er the scene wide desolation reigns;
E'en the vast sea rolls back, while many a crash
From burning rocks its hissing waters splash.

Brief time the noise is hushed! and, 'midst that
calm,
The listening ear drinks in a holy balm!
—Yes! 'tis the Christian's hymn! which, floating
high, [13]
Seems to suspend the vengeance of the sky!
Led by the glare of fierce, volcanic light,
They meet 'midst horrors of unnatural night,
And seek, beneath yon arch, Jehovah's aid,
While Christian faith and hope their souls pervade!

"Lo! the Judge of all, descending,
Rescue to the faithful brings;
Clouds and tempests, round attending,
Veil the splendour of his wings.

"Day of judgment! hour of doom,
Welcome, welcome, are ye come!
Welcome, time of sainted rest,
Welcome to each Christian breast!

"Rescue now from persecution,
Stripes, and flame, and reeking sword!
Welcome, day of retribution,
To the faithful of their Lord!

"By the blood on Calvary shed,
Where thy Son for sinners bled;
By the shade of darkest gloom
Which enwrapp'd his rocky tomb;

"By the power of His ascension,
When he burst the vanquished grave;
Cheering proof of our redemption,
Earnest of His power to save;

"By His gift, the Holy Ghost,
Given on day of Penteeost;
By our faith, our earnest prayer,
Take us, Lord! beneath thy care:

"Save us, in this hour of doom!
Save us, for the hour is come!
Save, O save us!" * *
* * * * * *

The hymn is lost! amidst a din of sounds
Which Heaven's wide arch with reeling earth confounds;
A denser vapour from the mountain's side
Shoots through the air in suffocating tide,
And larger, mightier, darker, in its way,
Spreads ghastly night across the realms of day.
—Tinging the blackness with its frequent flame,
In fiercer blaze the vivid lightning came,
And seem'd in shifting hue, and varied dies,
With horrid splendour to illume the skies:
In brightest blue—anon, in snake-like green,
The restless flash in quivering change is seen;
Now blood-red crimson in its ardent glow,
Now pale, now deadly pale, as driven snow. [14]

Hark! to that deep, that more than thunder's sound—
Trembles the earth, and cleaves the solid ground!
Again, that fearful shock! the massy wall
Reels from its lowest stone; the temples fall!
Yon mountain's giant crest has burst amain,
And spreads a molten torrent to the plain:
The sudden Phlegethon, Death seems to guide,
Lash its red wave, and on its surface ride;
Hurling its deluge down the steepy sides,
In one vast avalanche the lava glides;
And, as from hell's dark jaws, the current strong
To the devoted city sweeps along;
While fiery cataracts, and blacker smoke,
From the deep crater in confusion broke!
Beneath the earthquake's force, the tempest-shower,
The bounding wave assumes a tenfold power,
Then leaves the uncouth monsters of the main
High on the shore, convulsed with torturing pain.

Prompted by God, the Red Sea thus, of yore,
Hurled Egypt's armies on its vengeful shore,
And strewed their stiff'ning corses o'er the beach,
Beyond the precincts of its wonted reach.[16]
O! for the tempest breeze, the swelling sail,
To 'scape the horrors of this baneful gale!
O! for an eagle's rapid wing to fly
Beyond the confines of this fatal sky!
But ah! Hope's faintest beam of heavenly light
Is shrouded in Despair's impending night.

Meanwhile, the crowds again, in frantic wrath,
And desperate fury, urge their onward path;
All social ties are lost—no further stay—
Self, self alone, impels their headlong way;
State, rank, or sex, no more their thoughts engage,
The helpless infant, or decrepid age;
Despairing, crushing, trampling, on they go,
Like billowy ocean, in its wildest flow;

Forward they press, 'midst groans, and oaths, and cries,
While sudden shrieks or solemn prayers arise;
No stop, no question, no recovering breath,
And he that falls, but sinks to instant death:
Ashes on ashes follow, shower on shower
Around their course new desolation pour;
While earthquake, lightning, thunder, mingling round,
Appal the soul, and 'midst the heavens resound!
Wild, haggard, ghastly, whelmed in nerveless fear,
Vast rushing groups encountering groups appear;
Showing in every face the lurid glare
Of ghost-like paleness, and of dumb despair.

Where shall they fly?—in every tottering street
Ruin on ruin cuts off all retreat.
Where shall they fly?—the loved, the sheltering roof
Against this war of nature is no proof.

E'en the late sacred fanes but serve to show
Destruction round, by fire's unceasing glow;
No hope to cheer them, and no hand to guide :—
The very foot-path seems to creep and slide!
If to the open land they urge their feet,
A wider danger seems their way to meet;
Cinders and rock the unsheltered earth deform,
And dash around them in promiscuous storm!
Groaning and shifting in its war of waves,
The sea seems shrinking to its deepest caves,
And rushing devious from the earthquake's force,
Quits the rent shore, and hurries back its course.
Huddling together—stunned—of sense bereft,
Men glare around in vain, to right or left;
Half-buried, quivering corpses round them lie;
And hopeless dread forbids the power to fly.
Borne on by howling winds, sharp dust descends,
From which no shelter a protection lends.
A griping sense of keen, convulsive pain
Tugs at each nerve, and throbs in every vein;

Each moment breath and consciousness depart;
And blood revulsive clogs the labouring heart!
Dank, steaming, poisonous vapours taint their
breath,
And all is racking doubt, dismay, and death.
Dread hour of doom! all nature seems at strife,
And heaven's whole powers at war with human life.

Another pause succeeds!—the mighty hill,
Like a worn demon in his wrath, is still:
E'en yet the rumbling ground, the groaning waves,
And hissing gases bursting from their caves,
Foretell new efforts in the womb of earth,
Darkly maturing for a speedy birth.
From the deep chasms thick baneful vapours
stream;
And 'gainst the gloom the blazing vineyards gleam.

The thief, emerging by the flickering light,
Heaps up his desperate gains with strange delight;

And, as he fondly views the dazzling store,
Casts round his fiendish eye, and hopes for more.
Accursed thirst of gold! thy dire control
Absorbs each sacred purpose of the soul;
Powerless seems death, thy craving to allay;
And hell in vain stands yawning in thy way.

In the brief pause, behold, with trembling feet,
Yon mansion's lord runs wildly through the street:
His lifted hands the loved Penates bear, [17]
Once his fond boast—now deaf to every prayer!
The hurried flight his following slaves attend,
And with the weight of choicest treasures bend:
But every hope is fled! the throbbing breast
Clogs with the venom of the mortal pest;
Swells the full pulse, the swimming eye-balls roll,
Till fate, at length, relieves the struggling soul. [18]
Meanwhile, a tenfold steam ascends on high,
Compress'd, and rising swiftly to the sky,

Then, for brief space, o'er heaven's vast concave spread,
Falls, like a deluge, on the stricken head;
On its deep stream, thick ashes hurled along,
Choke the dark vaults, and whirl the depths among! [19]

If, haply, o'er this page should roam an eye
Which love confounds with sensuality—
For such there are, dead both to sense and shame,
Lost to fair honour, and debased in fame,
Who prey on female hearts; and dare express
A lawless scorn for social happiness—
Here let him close the book, nor impious read
Of scenes which make the virtuous bosom bleed!
For him no heaven-taught bard attunes his lyre;
He claims nor music's voice or poet's fire:
Much less would Love, robed in her holiest beam,
Pour on such ear depraved her sweetest theme.

Ere now, the happy pair, whom morning's ray
Lit to high Juno's fane in rich array,
Had reached their home, where songs and music round,
Pealed a full welcome in commingling sound.
Far from the town the spacious mansion rose,
Where nature's choicest gifts the site enclose;
Ev'n where yon hillock caught the southern ray,
And sloped its bosom to the tranquil bay.
The portals blush with many a verdant wreath, [20]
And sweetest fragrance o'er their pathway breathe.
To Vesta sacred, with especial care, [21]
Above the threshold they the virgin bear—
At once the enraptured bridegroom hastes to bring,
With throbbing breast, each votive offering:
First, at her feet, his mansion's keys are laid,
A willing tribute to the blushing maid;
Next, limpid water from the bubbling springs,
And sacred fire the anxious lover brings,

Emblems of purity, of plighted vows,
Of blended souls, of all that heaven allows.

O woman! when thy young untainted soul
Is true to nature and its wise control;
When all is pure, and no false thoughts molest
Thy calm tranquillity, thy seraph rest;
And when love's influence, mightiest of the mind,
That orient beam of bliss to human kind,
Sends its first throbbing through thy angel breast,
That trembling—doubting of its bliss—is blest,
And, as a magic, by thy beauty's glow,
Tinges with crimson flush thy form of snow;
How soft, how dear, how sacred then the sigh,
How bright the spark, quick flashing in thine eye,
As, spite of worldly wealth or earthly power,
Thou giv'st the one adored thy heart a dower.

And such was Julia's love! for, I might say,
She was that stranger in this earthly way,

In whom was blended, in one ray intense,
All that attracts and chains the purer sense;
A dove-like innocence, a bland repose,
Bedecked her brow, and from her aspect rose,
And threw a sacred halo round her head,
Which fancy worshipped, as by beauty fed.

To grow of her enamoured soon inspired
All that a poet's fervent hopes desired;
A charmed world seemed opened on the view,
And all that met the ear or sight was new:
Formed to direct and fascinate the will,
It seemed, at her command, that life stood still,
Relaxing all its movements, all its force,
Till that command again impelled their course;
Then hope and warm ambition urged them on,
Aspiring to, and seeking her alone.

Her's was the form which by concentred charms,
The fabled Venus of all power disarms;

The brow, the damask cheek, the braided hair,
The dimpled chin, the swan-like neck were there!
Graceful each movement, each to nature true,
At every turn fresh admiration drew;
And, as the wave that cools, the sun that warms,
The dew that softens, tempest that alarms,
So, from her look, her smile, or seeming frown,
Young hope was brighten'd, or at once cast down.

He, too, the youth who to her heart aspired,
In female judgment was no less admired;
Brilliant, and redolent of youthful grace,
Distinct in stately form, in manly face,
Impelled by nobler thoughts, by higher views,
Than pleasure's or ambition's slave pursues,
Enlightening all, exalted or profound,
He threw the splendour of his nature round,
As from his lip the stream of science flowed,
Whate'er he touched with sudden radiance glowed. [22]

'Midst the corruptions of that early time,
'Midst the enticements of that sunny clime,
'Midst avarice, ambition, lawless sway,
His mind held on an uncorrupted way,
And soared, with steady track and eagle ken,
Beyond the common course and views of men.

For such to meet and love was nature's will—
Nay, more, 'twas Heaven's fixed purpose to fulfil.

And shall the heartless libertine despise,
Such dear, such holy sensibilities?
He, rioting in vice and base desire,
Quenches the torch of nature's bliss in mire:
Cloyed by licentiousness, his youth's bright day,
Fritter'd in vile pursuits, is worn away!
Vain fool; while madly thou presum'st to claim,
In thy lascivious haunts, an odious fame,
The God of nature plants within thy heart
That well-earned curse, which ripens in its smart—

Countless desires—a restless fancy there,
Stain all thy movements and beget despair;
The glory of thy years debased and fled—
An early winter gathering on thy head;
Some glow-worm beauty, with attractive power,
Dazzling thine eyes by lurements of the hour—
Thy heart exhausted in pursuit of bliss,
By shadows led—the substance sure to miss,
And all thy conscience, if yet such there be,
The sickly slave of low depravity!

Witness, just God! when, to a father's knee,
I lift the prattling babe derived from Thee,
When from its pouting lips I tempt the kiss,
And my heart bounds with all a parent's bliss,
I feel a joy more sacred, pure, and free,
Than ages give to sensuality;
I feel a brighter glow, a holier fire
Than vice can boast, or all its charms inspire.

Such was the passion, sacred and refined,
Which glowed in Caius' breast, in Julia's mind,
In early days the vivid spark was bred;
Years fann'd the flame, and deep conviction fed.
Virtue and honour, sanctity and truth,
The morning dawn of life-confiding youth;
Invention, fancy, thought, experience, mind,
Swell'd as a river in its flow combined;
Till in one sea, one harmony of soul,
No depth could fathom it, no bound control.

He was her sun, her principle of light—
She the young bud, expanding to his sight;
And, if that all-sustaining light should fade,
The drooping sun-flower withered in the shade.
Refined by feelings from so pure a source,
Etherealized by beauty's magic force,
Caius could only breathe his Julia's name,
The something, sacred as his altar's flame—

Mistress at once and idol of his days,
He deemed no tongue but his should speak her praise;
He only worthy to approach her throne,
He thought, he spoke, he felt her his alone!
'Mid storms of life they each had learned to fly
For instant refuge in their sympathy;
Heaven, they conceived, had on their union smiled,
And confidence, from woe its sting beguiled.

Yes, 'tis before such love as this is formed,
By time cemented and by trial warmed,
We think the throbbing breast the flame hath caught,
We deem the poet has the passion taught;
But, as yon silvery stars dissolve away
Before the bursting dawn, the risen day,
Ev'n thus the poet's vision fades from sight
Before this glorious beam—this perfect light.

Did Julia sing? O! in each melting note,
Streams of sweet sound round Caius seemed to float;
Incense was wafted from the realms above,
And the charmed earth felt redolent of love!
Did Julia smile? O! to that smile was given
All that he'd heard, or thought, or hoped of heaven;
Discord was hushed, and banished every care,
A present bliss, a deity was there!

In faith confiding, down life's distant sea
They spread their chart of future destiny,
While o'er their present hopes the future shone,
Ev'n as beyond the spring bright summer's sun.
O love! when in the young and virtuous breast
Thou build'st thy home, thou weav'st thy fairy nest,
Gladness is on thy wings, and storms but tend
Thy brighter radiance with man's life to blend;

But when the heart hath fallen from its trust,
Rent from its prop, and mingled with the dust,
Whirl'd in the soiling path awhile it flies,
Then, crushed for ever, it for ever dies.

But haste we to our tale! The noon speeds fast,
And thronging slaves prepare a quick repast;
Couches, replete with classic form and grace,
Around the wide cœnaculum they place.
The silver canisters with bread are stored,
Honey, with fruits and cakes, bedeck the board,
Choice raisins here with laughing grapes combine
To mock the flashes of the ruby wine.

Rang'd in thick rows, or stretched on beds of state,
Th' assembling guests the bridal feast await,
Some, girt with snow-white napkins, bathe their hands
In sparkling water from the silvery stands; [23]

While some, with decent and attentive care,
For short ablutions to the bath repair.
Meanwhile, the graceful bridegroom bears along
A polished vase above the jocund throng,
Brimming with nuts, and crowding boys around [24]
Rush to the well-known games with ready bound.
" Witness, ye boys ! " the smiling Caius said,
" My days of youthful pastime now are fled ;
" Far other cares, and hopes of other joy,
" The days of marriage and of men employ.
" Haste to the sport, exert your youthful powers
" To seize these symbols of my thoughtless hours."
He said, and instant dashed upon the earth
The bounding nuts, provocatives of mirth ;
Quick o'er the floor the eager boys are spread,
Scrambling with outstretched arms or pommelled head ;
Impatient violence knows no delay,
The fame is his who bears the most away.

Order at length restored, the flutes again
Send forth a quicker and more melting strain ;
While numerous voices, blending with their sound,
Echo the loud Thalasian hymns around. [25]

Near to the bridal pair, on couch elate,
A sighing youth, the love-thrall'd Decius sate,
His eye still turned, and cheek with flushing glow,
To blooming Marcia, in the circling row ;
And, as responsive to that restless eye,
His throbbing bosom heaved the frequent sigh.
Full often had the youth express'd his pain,
Proffered his troth, and sought the maid to gain ;
But ah ! the laughter-loving god denied,
And Marcia heard him with disdainful pride ;
Herself as yet too young, too wild for love,
As a cold friend the sighing boy would prove ;
But what is friendship to the tortured breast,
Where Cupid's shaft forbids the balm of rest ?

'Tis as the feeble impotence of age
Against the lightning's flash, the tempest's rage—
Him Caius marked, and, leaning o'er the throng,
Signed to th' enamoured Decius for a song;
Nor could the blushing youth the song deny—
Such were the rites—or venture a reply.
At length a smile from Marcia nerved his breast,
And the weak strains his faltering tongue expressed.

"Forgive, forgive me, dearest maid,
That e'er I dared thy heart to prove—
That e'er from friendship's path I strayed,
And sought the dangerous track of love!

"Forgive, forgive the burning ray
Which lately lit my venturous eye,
Which taught my tongue such vows to pay,
Which woke my bosom's softest sigh.

" O ! 'twas a frenzy seized my frame,
From wild delirium sprung the thought !
A thousand charms inspired the flame,
A thousand hopes the passion caught !

" Vain thoughts away ! of folly's breed ;
Your soft delusions now are o'er ;
From all such dazzling lurements freed,
This heart shall own the snare no more.

" Ah ! then forgive me, dearest maid,
That thus I dared thy heart to prove ;
That ere from friendship's path I strayed,
And madly tried the course of love !"

He ceased ! a sudden twilight veils the room !
The goblet fails, the garlands cease to bloom ;
Lo where a giant spirit stirs abroad !
The wise grow idiots, and the brave are awed.

A rough, terrific, subterranean sound
Rolls with deep echo 'neath the heaving ground,
While to its thunder, in resistless course,
Whirls up the billowing earth with tempest force;
Earthquake, wild earthquake, shakes the yielding plain.
Before it nature shrinks, and art is vain;
And, as th' uprising Titan from his sides [26]
Shakes off the mountains, and their weight derides,
So moved the demon in infernal might,
Exciting agony and wild affright.
The distant yelling sea, the gloom of heaven,
Laden with sulphurous fate, by lightning riven,
Urge on the blasting death, and mix on high
With mortal shrieks, and groans of agony!
Veil, veil, my muse, the terrors of the hour;
Description fails thee; and poetic power,
Hide, in oblivion hide, nor vainly throw
Thy feeble wailings on this scene of woe!

'Bove all, e'en now, I hear the bridegroom's prayer.
Wrung from his soul in agonized despair,
When from his grasp, with deep convulsive breath,
Sank his young bride amidst that scene of death.
His eyes to heaven upturned, would fain demand
Some instant succour—some Almighty hand;
Yet no rash CLAIM excites that suppliant soul.
Where tyrant anguish holds a firm control:
'Tis the mute pleading of the tortured mind,
To deepest woe and agony consigned,
When nature stagnates in her every part,
And the red current palsies at the heart!
—Is there yet hope?—see, o'er her face he bends,
Shields her fair form, and with his own defends.
Is there yet hope?—alas, that bursting sigh
That ghastly paleness, yields a dumb reply!—
"Spare, gracious Gods! spare, this your gift!" he cries,
And with a look—one frenzied look, he dies.

O, such is human bliss! the meteor ray
Gilds the young orient of man's fleeting day:
Awhile, the fairy phantom mocks his sight,
And spreads its hues of gay, prismatic light;
But ah! full soon, that morning ray is past,
A fatal change descends upon the blast;
And the vain lure which held our senses bound, [27]
Dissolves to air, or spreads in vapour round.

Near his black corse, in one promiscuous heap,
Friends, kindred, people, sink to endless sleep;
Horror and dire dismay, with rapid pace—
Or death, more welcome, 'whelms the struggling race.

As, in our northern clime, the fleecy snow
Shifts its thick current where the breezes blow,
The silvery flakes, as in some sportive play,
At first the impulse of the blasts obey;

Deep and more deep, at length, the torrents lower,
And ether's self seems bending with the shower;
'Till, drift on drift, extending wide around,
One undistinguished ruin hides the ground!
So, from yon fiery mountain rising high,
The lurid tempest, blackening all the sky,
Spreads a vast deluge o'er Campania's plain,
And her late splendid towns are sought in vain! [28]

END OF CANTO THE FIRST.

Hast thou e'er watched the marble brow,
By beauty circled even now,
Just when life's last and lingering ray
Resigned its seat to native clay?
And hast thou seen the winding sheet
Wrap the pale corse from head to feet,
And didst thou shed the gushing tear
For the mute tenant of the bier?
And sighing o'er each air-built plan,
Groan for the nothingness of man?

Here, may'st thou find a deeper source
For sighs, and tears, and sorrow's course,
As, looking on Pompeii's plain,
Thy soul is touched with moral strain!

A city here, in all her pride,
Drank the full flow of pleasure's tide;
Its joyous thousands here were placed
'Midst scenes by nature's bounty graced;
And, in a day, destruction's wave
Swept all beneath a common grave;
A grave so vast, so wide, so deep,
Ages have wondered where they sleep!

Well may'st thou weep, but oh, discern
The moral thou hast hence to learn,
And ere from off these plains you move,
Fix, fix thy every trust above.

Canto II.

Changed be the strain!—again, to mortal eyes,
Pompeii's walls from buried gloom arise,
Cleansed from their shroud:—on nature's shifting stage,
Behold the remnants of the early age!
E'en as some fabled tenant of the grave,
From secret confines of unhallowed cave,
With pausing step explores a once-loved scene,
And shews affrighted man where man has been!
Thus, on yon beauteous coast, exposed to sight,
Still as the tomb, and silent as the night,
Long, roofless streets to mournful view display
What once was lovely, animate, and gay;

Strew with sepulchral marks the fatal shore,
Where voice is heard, where man is seen, no more.

Mute chill of heart! dire palsy of the soul,
That o'er my spirit throws a dread control!
Which awes my mind as 'midst these scenes I tread
These sad mementos of the buried dead,
Hence! speed ye hence, and give my thoughts their way,
My tongue its office, and my heart its play!

Mysterious Babel of a bygone age,
Above whose circuit Chaos vents its rage;
Within whose precincts once were heard aloud
The busy murmurs of the reckless crowd,
Who in their separate interest poured along,
'Midst joy or woe, 'midst wretchedness or song;
How shall the bard th' appalling theme pursue,
Or range his varying notes to sing of you,

Unless some ray divine his soul inspire,
Beam on his mind, and animate his lyre?
E'en here, perhaps, beneath this roofless shed,
Crime stalked, or want once spread her scanty bed;
'Till the heart fainted 'neath its constant moan,
Or famine hushed at length the feeble groan.

Beneath yon pillar'd fabric, purpled wealth
Wasted in gross debauch the bloom of health;
And jovial slaves, with mutely pilfering hand,
Mocked the vain lordling in usurped command.—
From forth that narrow window, which on high
Caught the first flashes of Campania's sky,
Perchance some student's flickering lamp hath shed
Its midnight ray around the aching head;
Or sickening odours from unwholesome oil
Poisoned the health, and baulked the poet's toil.—
Such is the chequer'd lot of all below,
Tinged with the flitting hues of hope or woe;

E'en as yon spangling gems which gild the night,
Absorbed are mingled in the morning's light;
Or as the northern gleams, which flash and play,
Then wane and vanish at the opening day;
Yes, such the fate of man through every age,—
Still thronging onward o'er life's shifting stage;
Th' unsated gulf of ages swallows all,
And one vast night enwraps them in its pall.

Though centuries have urged their noiseless course,
Whose silent tongues yet speak with moral force,
Fresh from the dust behold these walls arise,
And paintings blush e'en as by recent dyes;
The rich mosaic floors few marks deface,
Order still reigns, with much of pristine grace;
Unfinished buildings seem to wait the hour,
While his repast repairs the workman's power;
Or from his noontide rest, at nature's need,
Returned, it seems these structures will proceed,

And uncapped columns rear their heads on high,
To fax the judgment or delight the eye.
See! e'en the tools their hands so late forsook
Are lodged with careless haste in yonder nook!

Beneath yon garden trees the tripod stands,
Claiming the sacrifice from looked-for hands;
And graceful seats are ranged with artful care,
Where joyous guests inhaled the vernal air
With which, beneath Campania's sunny sky,
The rose or orange bathes the zephyr's sigh;
Amid yon halls, responsive now no more,
The massy chest displays its treasured store,
And wealth, once sacred to religion's shrine,
Lies hoar with age, and sanctified by time;
The strigils still the ready baths adorn,
And e'en the garments by frequenters worn;—
The vivid paintings of yon gorgeous stage
Are perfect still, still triumph over age;

Here riven theatres to view display
The varied scenes of dramas passed away,
Whence thronging crowds in deep suspense admired
Progressive feats by gods or heroes fired;
As the rapt poet poured the tale along
In tragic harmony or burst of song.—
The lamps suspended in yon spacious dome
Wait but the torch to light their master home,
And fragments spread on the triclinium's floor
Tell, as it were, the feast but lately o'er.—
Lo! 'midst the chamber's secrets we descry
Perfumes, and rouge, held dear to beauty's eye;
Around are combs and graceful trinkets spread,
Which decked the person or attired the head,
And slender bones, which erst with vigour rife
Moved, 'midst these scenes, each luxury of life.—
Such are the objects which around us stand,
And claim attention at the poet's hand.

Ye once famed guardians of each hallowed shrine, [29]
Where cheated fancy held ye all divine;
And thou, Pantheon, to whose crowded court,
Heaven, earth, and hell's assembled gods resort:
Say, could no hand your tottering temples save?
Would none stand forth the sweeping storm to brave?
Must all your boasting deities retire
Before a tempest of your Vulcan's fire?
—Vain trust of man! your very altars fall;
Your faithless power, attests each broken wall:
And while such scenes awake the Christian's sigh,
Grief for man's erring faith bedews his eye.

But rest we here! and though the mists of age
Throw a dim shade on mythologic page;
Though brief our progress, and obscured our way,
We draw some records to the light of day,
Of times, when Superstition's powerful aid
Gave a substantial form to fancy's shade;

For when the lightning blazed, *her* arm was feared,
And when heaven's thunders roared, *her* voice was heard:
She taught with awe the tyrant's breast to quake,
Pour the deep vow, and at *her* mandates shake:
Within *her* cell mysterious omens flamed,
And well-feigned oracles their fates proclaimed;
To aid the fable, from his honeyed tongue
Th' enraptured poet poured the swell of song,
Pointed fair Virtue to the bless'd abodes,
And stamped on Vice the vengeance of the gods.
No revelation yet, with cloudless ray,
Had pierced the moral gloom which wrapp'd their day;
No heavenly beam to their uncertain sight,
Brought "Life and immortality to light;" [39]
But all the mind, in midnight darkness lost,
Sport of each gale, by every tempest tost,
Flashed, meteor-like, across the gloomy void,
By passion prompted, or by lust destroyed.

E'en now, the hour of sacrifice begins,
The expiation for a people's sins :—
Mark ! where the priest in deep ablution laves,
And bends his body 'neath the sparkling waves ;
Now binds his temples with the verdant bough,
And twines the sacred fillet round his brow.
Proceeding slowly to the fane divine,
He bears the simpulum with hallowed wine ;
While numerous youths, who to the rites belong,
With weighty patera, or baskets, throng.
In order next, musicians crowd the way,
And on soft pipes or harps slow dirges play ;
These, as the fasces arm their nervous hands,
The lictors follow, in compacted bands.—
Doomed by the mute conductor's arm to bleed,
With trappings bound, the victims next succeed ; [31]
And bearing sacrificial cups along,
With arms and breasts unclothed, the Popæ throng.—

The death-struck beast now loads th' ensanguined
ground;
And as a breathless silence reigns around, [32]
The "Flamen," with attentive eye, awaits
The opening entrails, and predicts the fates;
Tells their propitious signs with cheerful voice,
And bids the circling multitude rejoice:
At which the feast proceeds, and the vast crowd
Laud their vain Gods, and hymn their praise aloud.
—Such was man's erring faith! the strong control
Which held in bigot bond th' immortal soul:
A faith, where Gods of earth, and sea, and air,
Held separate province, and peculiar care;—
Gods, famed far less for virtue than for lust,
Whose powers appal, whose flagrant deeds disgust;
Yet such a dark mythology had made,
And such the untutored mind of man obeyed;
While schemes, by priest-craft forged, in deepest
night,
Threw a delusive guile across the sight.

Proceed we now, and where th' admitted day,
Free from obstruction, pours a piercing ray,
Let us, with cautious step, explore the way.
—See where the jointed tesseræ unite,
And at the mansion's entrance court the sight;
The hospitable "*Salve!*" greets the eye,
And bids the stranger lay his caution by;
Hails his approach with mute but cheering tone,
In all the sacred claims of "welcome" known.
Pass we the vestibule of ample size, [33]
And the triclinium greets the anxious eyes: [34]
Here couches, richly decked, allured to rest,
Or the spread feast refreshed the willing guest;
While deep recesses to the harp resound, [35]
And vaulted ceilings echoed back the sound;
Proud feats of arms, and deeds of ancient times,
Responded to the poet's honoured rhymes,
Whilst ever and anon the claims of love
Were known the heart to cheer, the soul to move;

Till the wing'd spirit lost its sense of earth,
And soared to heaven, the fountain of its birth.
—Far different then from our degenerate age,
The Bard was welcomed by the great and sage;
The learned, the virtuous, pleaded then his cause,
And wondering nations hailed him with applause.
He wove the wreath to deck the hero's name;
He twined the monarch's brow with deathless fame;
Unsung by *him*, the fight was scarcely won,
And the rich meed devolved from sire to son.

Dear to the throbbing heart, and sparkling eye,
Hail! sun-born maid, transporting Harmony!
Fixed to no realm, restricted to no clime;
Regent o'er every grade, in every time:
'Tis thine to waken, or to chase the tear;
To melt the soul, the gloomy brow to cheer:
In every generous breast thy power is known,
In every feeling heart is built thy throne;

Is there the wretch who spurns thy sacred sway?
Bear, bear the ungracious monster far away:
Place him beyond man's reach! where tempests blow
'Midst Polar horrors, and congenial snow;
Nor let his presence blight the social scene,
Where human thought exists, where human foot is seen!

And Thou, sweet Author of the poet's lay,
Twin-born with harmony—of equal sway!
Who, as soft music sounds her mystic shell,
Lov'st, near her side, in rapturous trance to dwell:
'Till, catching inspiration from the skies,
Thou bid'st the hymn in swelling peal arise,
While vivid "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,"
Flash from the precincts of thy magic urn!
If, when young Spring with frolic hand has thrown
The peeping snowdrop from her spangled zone;

When laughing Summer, in maturer bloom,
Hath decked the fields in prodigal perfume;
When Autumn's richest fruits, of varied die,
Have charmed the taste, and pressed the goblet high;
Or, when pale Winter bids her realm disclose
Bleak, desolating frost, and 'whelming snows;
If, 'midst the world's pernicious, flattering ways
Where cursed allurement, all deceiving, strays;
Where scarce a virtue meets the aching eye,
And scarce a friend restrains the bursting sigh!
If I have turned from all—with spirit free,
And breathed my soul to solitude and thee;
Still shall this heart confess the heavenly charm
Which taught my tongue to lisp, my breast to warm!
For O! when recreant to thy call I prove,
Then, nor 'till then, this pulse shall cease to move;
Then, nor 'till then, unconscious of thy fire,
Each hope shall fade, and all of life expire!

Nor such the only marks by which we trace
The arts and habits of the early race,
Wrung from the grasp of time! Of olden days
Each varied relic its intent displays,
And to the anxious eye, though rudely planned, [36]
Bespeaks the purpose of the maker's hand.
The decorated rooms by emblems tell [37]
Their clear intentions; where the inmates dwell;
Thus viands, or the cup for cheering wine,
Shew the triclinium, or the hall to dine;
The books and writing implements proclaim
The student's sanctum, dear to lettered fame;
The chamber still displays, by signs confessed,
The stove for genial warmth, the couch for rest;
The toilet's secret mysteries declare
The once-loved boudoir of th' aspiring fair;
For cunning early baffled nature's will,
Flushed the wan cheek, and taught the eye to kill;
E'en then, alas! as now, the skilful dame
Fanned in the unconscious breast a traitor flame;

Took virtue's garb, or blooming youth's pretence,
To veil deformity, or want of sense;
And, with hypocrisy, and blighting art,
Allured the stripling's peace, and stung his heart.

Now pass we hence, to where yon lengthened street, [38]
Decked with fair tombs, delays the lingering feet;
And stretching forwards, from the inquiring eye
Claims the warm tear, or tributary sigh;
Here frantic breasts were beat, deep woes were shed,
And unavailing cries invoked the dead;
Unguents and choicest wines were sprinkled round, [39]
To cool the remnants on the heated ground,
And the loved ashes, snatched with pious cares
From smouldering fire, and sanctified with tears, [40]
In sculptured urns their separate niches kept,
And in the gloom of dark oblivion slept;

While monumental pomp and polished art
Beguiled the anguish of the mourner's heart.
Ah, little thought those friends, whose fond regard
These urns and funeral monuments prepared,—
Ah, little dreamt they of that awful doom
Which made their city but one general tomb;
As death, in blackest horrors, raging near,
Struck down his thousands with a flaming spear!
How envied, then, the lot of those who passed,
And in the arms of parents breathed their last;[41]
Whose funeral honours calmed their burst of woe,
Hushed the full breast, and checked their sorrow's flow.

Pause o'er this relic of time's early day;
Suspend thy sighs and give thy fancy play!
Perhaps this urn, this fragile urn, contains
Fame's holiest, or affection's loved remains;
Some breast which warm with sternest valour glowed,
Or Tully's tongue, whence patriot vengeance flowed;

The heart, perhaps, where honour's flame burnt
high,
Whose Roman virtue lit the flashing eye.—
O! 'tis on earth a glorious sight to see
The brave soul battling with adversity,
And, through each obstacle and gathered ill,
Striving its god-like purpose to fulfil:
Though darkness veil, though soft allurement smile,
Though danger threaten, or though craft beguile;
Though want, the deadliest of all human foes,
Chill the worn breast, and blast with all its woes;
And wearing, drop by drop, the heart away,
The ties, affections, hopes, of life's short day;
Fretting that mind no mortal eye can see,
With deep corroding care and misery!
When, too, the pride of birth, the glow of mind,
By knowledge dignified, by grace refined,
All that ennobles nature, sense, or life,
Is galled or blighted in relentless strife;
And nought, save virtue, now remains to bless
The struggling martyr in his wretchedness!

O ! it is glorious, 'mid such war, to see
The ways of God maintain their sanctity ;
O ! it is glorious, 'mid such scenes, to show
A mind erect and dauntless in its woe ;
Clothed in heaven's panoply serenely bright,
And rising brighter from such shades of night :
For such the world hath known—above their kind
By wisdom armed, and fortitude of mind,
Who, 'midst earth's storms and tempests held their way,
Honour their guide, and truth their beacon ray.
Such one perhaps was here ! though now unknown,
Pent and imprisoned in this circling stone ;
The hand may grasp what once enclosed a mind
No danger frighted, and no space confined.

Alas, for man ! weak ripple of the tide,
Sport of ambition, luxury, or pride !
Thou very feather on this tossing sea,
Urged on by passion or necessity ;

Ev'n though fair glory kindle in thy soul,
Light up thy powers, thy daring mind control,
And bid thee combat on this mortal sod,
For triumphs worthy of Olympia's god;
Look on this scanty dust, and tell me where
Dwells earthly object worthy of thy care?
Look on this dust—behold the end of fame,
The worth forgotten, and a blank the name.

Yon deep arcades, 'midst foul and noxious air,
The dungeon's gloomy vaultings still declare:
Mark we, e'en now, the stocks which culprits bound,
Where mouldering skeletons bestrew the ground: [42]
A two-fold fate o'erwhelmed their latest breath,
Who, with th' accusers, found a general death.
What bard shall tell, what daring pen declare
The maddening pangs which once concentred there,
When the lone culprit, 'midst increasing pain,
Gnawed his shrunk flesh, and tugged his galling chain?

—Brief time a treacherous hope's delusive ray
Lit with a flitting gleam his dungeon's way;
He thought, deep fixed beneath the caverned ground,
Death to escape, a refuge to have found:
Vast piles of rock the prison walls compose,
And pillared arches in protection rose.
But soon the noisome stench, the blasting shower
Of scorching ashes spread their baneful power;
The billowy earthquake shakes that hope away,
And fate condemns him as a certain prey.
Then throbbed his brain with all a father's fire,
For absent babes, loved consort, aged sire;
(Chained down to earth, and pillowed on a stone,
His doom from them far cast—to them unknown;)
Still round his heart they press with strongest ties,
And all the parent rushes to his eyes:
Ev'n then delirium mocks him in his need:
He seems, in fancy, from his bondage freed;
With them he climbs the mountain's crest on high,
Joy swells each pulse, his guide is liberty;

He feels the zephyr bathe his cheerful brow,
Lifts high his head, and breathes to heaven his vow.
—Again the foul contagion hurls him thence,
The stifling torture palsies every sense,
And dashing out his life, his soul is free
At once from thought, from pain, from slavery.

Trace here the spacious courts, for justice famed;
The tavern there its bacchanals maintained;[43]
Near which the martial barracks had their place,
Where vile buffooneries still the walls disgrace;
Time was, these courts with clang of armour rang,
And the loud plaudit followed him that sang;
While gibes and sports, or music, whiled away
The tedious sameness of each passing day.
Such was their life! and such, by heaven's high will,
Was hushed to silence, and at once was still;
For ah! a desperate venture broke their rest,
A deadlier contest nerved the mailed breast:

To 'scape surrounding fate the soldier tries,
But tries in vain, it fronts him as he flies:
From the dense cloud pestiferous ashes shed
Unerring ruin on the warrior's head;
In vain he climbs the fast increasing hill,
Hills rise above him, and impede him still;
'Till, gasping, fainting, and devoid of strength,
He measures in the mass his giant length.

Amid yon vineyard's thickly spreading green,
Whose laughing clusters mock the pensive scene,
What time along its path the wanderer strays,
And with slow step the neighbouring vault surveys;
He starts to find the human form impressed
Where yet disjointed bones embedded rest;
And treasured objects, loved through life too well,[44]
Still keep the place where first their owner fell.

As when an artist in the well-turned mould,
Pours fusive metal, or refulgent gold,

The die removed, a living likeness shines,
And future ages mark the perfect lines:—
Thus, midst yon lava-bed, we still descry,
In death-struck posture, where the mighty lie;
The liquid coffin which around them pressed,
Retains the impress on its hardened breast. [45]

Yet still the laurel springs, the lily blooms,
And sportive zephyrs breathe with rich perfumes;
Still Nature here her gayest mantle throws, [46]
Begemmed with wild flowers, and the varied rose;
From her cerulean sky, with liberal hand,
She paints with thousand hues the treacherous land,
And seems, in wanton mockery, to shed
Her sweetest, richest fragrance, o'er the dead!
The waves alone in murmuring notes complain,
And wail around the cities of the plain.

Oft-times, reposing where the mantling vine
Weaves its young tendrils with luxuriant twine,

Whose shade, impervious to the solar ray,
Mocks the vain efforts of the garish day;
The poet, stretched in inspiration's sheen,
Renews with life each long deserted scene,
Peoples the silent glade, and seems to hear
Strange sounds and voices pealing on his ear;
Before yon gates the guardian sentries stand,
And sparkling javelins arm each nervous hand;
The golden sunbeams dance along their crests,
And tinge the cuirass on their manly breasts.
Meanwhile dense crowds proceed the streets along,
And all is life and revelry and song!
'Till, touched by truth and reason's sober ray,
The visions fade, the Phantoms melt away,
And flit, like shades of night, before the blaze of day.

Mementos of that period all sublime,
When its last hour proclaims the wreck of time;
When sun and stars in discord wild shall meet;
The elements dissolve in fervent heat;[17]

Nature no more her finite laws obey,
And, like a scroll, the heavens shall pass away;
Till, 'whelmed beneath one vast, exhaustless fire,
The wide extended universe expire.

God of all flesh! at whose resistless will,
Cities and states their destiny fulfil;
Whilst, in this land, we laud Thy sacred name,
And deck thine altars with a Christian flame;
A flame, more pure than heathen votaries knew,
The light of faith! well pleasing to thy view:
Grant this our prayer!—when o'er the sea and land
Thy mighty angel lifts his fateful hand,
Swears, by the terrors of thine awful throne,
That time's full orbit shall no more be known; [48]
Cleansed in redeeming blood we meet thy sight,
View worlds on fire, secure beneath Thy might,
Then rise, beyond all change, to realms of peerless light!

NIOBE.

SCULPTURE—ITS EFFECTS, &c.,

(As recited before the Cheltenham Literary and Philosophical Society.)

"Discite Justitiam moniti et non temnere Divos."—*Virgil.*

"——μαλ. ου δηναιος ος αθανατοισι μαχηται"—*Homer.*

NIOBE.

INTRODUCTION.

WHOEVER enters into a consideration of Heathen Mythology in connexion with the classical authors, and the general literature of the times when it was most widely diffused and most implicitly obeyed, will find, amidst the many absurdities which cause the philanthropist to shudder, and the Christian to lament, many an instructive and moral lesson, which the philosopher in our days, and the Christian to the end of time, may learn with delight, and inculcate with benefit.

Yes, often does a celestial beam, transient as may be its light, or evanescent as may be its flash, illuminate "that darkness which might be felt," under which an uninstructed and beclouded world wandered on in search of the "*summum bonum*," or the "το καλον" of their day. Nor are we left

without spiritual admonition, and even a confirmation of Revealed Religion, by these considerations; for it will be abundantly evident, though it pleased the Lord of all, before the "day-spring from on high visited us,"—before "life and "immortality were brought to light by the Gospel,"—that "God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," yet that "He left not himself without witness;"—but, though "they had not the law, yet were they a law unto themselves." —In other words, first and irresistible principles were so deeply engrafted in the heart of man by nature, that it was only by a direct violation of these mental restraints they could reject the path of virtue, and follow that of disobedience and vice.

Man, therefore, in his lowest and most debased condition, showed the primeval law of God written in the heart ("that "light which lighteth every man born into the world,") "their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, "the meanwhile, accusing, or else excusing one another." —Rom. ii. 14.

The Mythology of the Heathen world affords strong evidence to the opinions I have thus advanced; and in the

great works of art and science which are handed down to us, and which continue to excite the just admiration of our days as grand efforts of human genius—works which, though buried, perhaps, for 2,000 years, are becoming more and more the objects of intellectual pleasure—in these, I say, will yet be found, in a higher and nobler sense, lessons of instruction to the moralist, and precepts worthy of deep research, of profound study, and even of devout imitation, to the sincere and inquiring Christian.

It is with sentiments like these, sentiments worthy of our age and our faith, that I would wish to direct attention, and myself to contemplate those astonishing specimens of human ingenuity, which delight the eye, and at the same time are calculated to instruct the minds of admiring nations; and when, wonderstruck before the Belvidere Apollo, the group of the Laocoon, or that of the Niobe, I feel, as it were, paralyzed at the effects of the sculptor's design, and the execution of his chisel, I would desire to derive useful and even religious instruction, from the maxims which such efforts of genius are intended, and even capable of affording. In the statue or "group of the Niobe," as will abundantly appear from Mythological History, a great and

sublime precept is inculcated—a precept calculated to delight and improve us all: it is "our duty to God and his service." Whilst, then, this dumb and chiseled group stands before us radiant in beauty, and almost breathing with life; though we partake, as it were, of the mother's horrors on beholding her princely and numerous offspring expiring, one by one, under the shafts of the justly-offended deities, Apollo and Diana (whose rites and worship she had impiously despised), —yet let us, above all, imbibe the instruction which even this cold marble was intended to afford, and duly reverence, in holy fear, that glorious and Almighty Being whom, under a purer dispensation and more exalted faith, we are, on all sides, called upon to worship and adore.

NIOBE.

Or 'ere that transcript of th' Eternal mind—
A published Gospel—beamed on weak mankind,
And, as a beacon of celestial day,
Lit the vain wanderer in his mazy way;
A dark mythology e'en then began
To bind in laws the stubborn will of man;
From hence—or good or ill, or right or wrong,
Or bred by fable, or extolled by song,
Ranged in due place, and to its sphere assigned,
Awed the wild passions or controlled the mind.

Thus, near yon lofty temple's columned side,
(Eternal caution to the child of pride,)

The marble statue, with uplifted hands,
Cold as its circling blast for ever stands.

Ah, who shall tell how erst in life it moved,
The queen of thousands, and by all beloved!
In honour high, of fairest form confessed,
And in her offspring, how supremely blessed!
Too great—too happy—till her impious pride,
Latona's altars and her rites defied.

Lo! the twin Powers, fierce darting through the air [1]
To Cadmus' tower, a quick revenge prepare.
Th' immortal bows in eager haste were strung,
And the full quivers from their shoulders swung.
Twangs the dread string! the fatal arrows fly,
And bear unerring vengeance down the sky.
Her reason tottering 'midst the ruthless storm,
The frantic parent views each dying form;
Eyes, with bewildered look, the pallid clay,
And pants, at every wound, her soul away.

But see! the last of all her princely kind
Calls back once more to sense the tortured mind;
Strained to her breast in agonized despair,
She prays th' obdurate Gods but this to spare:
Vain her late prayer—the deadly shaft has flown,
And her torn spirit drinks the infant's groan.

Alas! nor music's voice, nor poet's lays,
Whose varied charm the heaven-taught soul obeys,
Can paint the deep emotions of the mind
To hope or fear, to pain or bliss consigned;
Can speak the pang, the bursting sigh express,
Wrung from the heart of utter hopelessness;
These matchless gifts to happier arts are known—
The hand of sculpture claims them for its own.

Immortal artist! wonder-struck we stand,
And own at once the magic of thy hand:
Here pride expires! here hope's last lingering sigh,
On trembling pinions flutters to the sky;

Here fervent prayer and wildest grief unite,
'Till mute delirium ends th' unequal fight.

E'en now! behold, her frenzied eye-balls roll;
A horrid palsy drinks her inmost soul;
The liquid marrow of each secret bone,
Cold petrefaction hardens into stone;
Still o'er her form the marble paleness creeps,
For ever hardens, and for ever weeps!

TEMPLE OF THESEUS.

ARCHITECTURE—ITS EFFECTS.

(As recited before the Cheltenham Literary and Philosophical Society.)

Amor Patriæ.

Dulce, et decorum est, pro patria mori.

THESEUS.

INTRODUCTION.

If, on introducing to public notice my poem on "The Niobe," I ventured to point out the moral instruction which mythologically it affords to the Christian's eye and to the Christian's heart, I can, with a like propriety, in the contemplation of "The Temple of Theseus," direct attention to a duty, though less dignified in precept, yet equally binding on the minds of all, and equally inwoven by nature in the feelings of the human breast.

It breathes much, if I might so express myself, of the second table of those laws which the beneficent and almighty Legislator of the universe engraved at Mount Sinai, as guides, in an earthly sense, to the generations of erring men.

The precept inculcated by "The Niobe" is "the love and reverence of God;" that stamped on the Temple of Theseus leads to the love of our neighbour, or more particularly "the love of our country."

We collect from history, that Theseus was King of Athens about 1,240 years before the Christian era. The records of that early period are so deeply enveloped in, and obscured by, fable, that it is impossible now to collect in what precise respects Theseus benefited his infant kingdom, but, inasmuch as statues and a magnificent temple were erected to his honour, where games and festivals were celebrated with great solemnity in the days of Pausanius and Plutarch (full 1,200 years after the death of Theseus), we may fairly conclude that he was not only an undaunted and successful warrior, but a wise and benevolent legislator.

Little can be ascertained from what are termed "the actions of Theseus," as they remain to this day, displayed on the friezes of that majestic building which has survived the shock of ages, and is still the most perfect ruin on the plains of Athens; nor can we be satisfied with any records from history. Such of those actions as I have introduced

in my short poem, are noted by classical authors, and described, as they now stand, by numerous historians of the country.

We may conclude, then, that Theseus was the Alfred of his day, to the rising kingdom of Athens—that the temple was erected to him as the generous benefactor in arts and arms to a grateful people; and, as I before observed, the moral, or precept, to be drawn from the contemplation of this vast and magnificent structure, is the "*Amor Patriæ*," or love of our country.

It has been said, and I think unfoundedly, "that the love of our country is not recommended by scriptural authority, and that the passions it excites are at variance with Christian charity;" but, if we consider this as an engrafted principle, common to every land and every breast: if we consider, also, the dealings with, and regulations enforced upon, the Jews under their Theocracy, or government by the Almighty, we must, I think, conclude that regard was especially had to the whole nation. The law of God was expressly written for and binding on ALL; punishment was decreed to him who, by transgression, caused even a brother

to offend; and rewards conferred on every one who benefited the community.—Our Lord himself, who died for all, wept over his earthly Jerusalem, and inculcated obedience and discipline for the general good.

Intemperate zeal, or misguided views, may doubtless lead to mischievous enormities; but the same "love of our country" is not less essential, but ever has been found eminently conducive, to the happiness of individuals, and of kingdoms.

I will not now stop to recount the particular instances in which this passion has been most beneficially or pre-eminently evinced; nor need I point to the pass of Thermopylæ, or the plains of Marathon, though especially connected with the subject of my poem, and where fable assumes the spirit of Theseus to have been seen rushing from the slumbers of the tomb, and aiming the weapons of his country on the vast host of its invaders! This, however, is abundantly clear, that the ancient Greeks, confederated under this great and glorious stimulus, though possessing a territory not half so large as England, were enabled not only to rout, disperse, and destroy, the most

numerous armies of its invaders, but to dispute for empire with the most powerful monarchs of the world: and truly, if "the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night," are evidences of Almighty guidance to his collective, but wandering people—if the sun stood still, and the moon was arrested in her course, till their enemies were destroyed—if man be called upon by nature, nay, by GOD himself, "to provide for and protect those of his own household;" surely the cry of public danger, from the great family of the State, should arm every hand in its defence, and, if necessary, should exact even the devotion of life for the country to which we are linked by every tie of honour, of interest, of nature, and religion.

Let it not be said, then, that the "*Amor Patriæ*" is either a useless, or an unchristian precept; to this spirit, under Providence, in the recollection of many among us even *these kingdoms* have been indebted, not only for all we value as men and Christians, but, when all was threatened, and all in danger, were we enabled, under God, and by a display of millions of voluntary swords, to cherish the sinking flame of liberty, which survived only in our much-

loved Britain, (the Thermopylæ of the universe,) and to send it forth, when the deluge had passed away, through a wasted but regenerating world.

TEMPLE OF THESEUS.

"Visions of Glory! spare my aching sight," [1]
Nor whelm my senses in delirium's night!
—Alas! they're gone—the meteor-wonders fade,
And desolation sweeps along the shade.

Ye prostrate columns, and ye tottering shrines,
Where still a ray of heavenly splendour shines;
Where the young wing of Genius learnt to fly,
And kindling valour raised to heaven his eye:
Where Tyrants' fates, and Freedom's watch-word hung
On the stern thunders of the Statesman's tongue;

Where first the breathing canvass learnt to glow,
The pipe to echo, and the song to flow!
Ye mystic groves! whose sacred shades inspired
The mind of Plato, and his genius fired: [2]
Once, once again, your long-lost charm resume,
Inspire my lays, and all my soul illume.

As when, on Marathon's immortal plain,
(Ere the proud foe in sanguine heaps lay slain,)
Thy god-like spirit, clear to mortal sight, [3]
Aimed the dread weapons of thy country's might,
Even thus, O THESEUS! stamped by art divine,
(Worthy the honours of thy rock-built shrine,)
Graved on th' eternal stone, at once confessed,
Thy patriot actions fire the throbbing breast.

When the skilled workman, taught by art divine,
Bids from the lathe the polished ivory shine, [4]
Forms and reforms it, both to size and place,
And charms the senses with a perfect grace;

Thus Paros' rifled quarry here displays
Arts' thousand beauties in united blaze;
The conscious sun, exulting to behold, [5]
Wraps the rich fabric in a glow of gold.

See, with what skill the plinths and mouldings join;
Mark the ranged capital's extended line!
The Doric pillars heave their heads on high,
And lift the mighty structure to the sky;
Enormous blocks in closest union run, [6]
Bind the vast pile, and knit the whole in one.

Now stretch the eye, and from the Metope's base
The Monarch's self and glorious actions trace;
Here groans the monster Bull—the Crommian Sow, [7]
And Sciron tumbles from the rocky brow.
See there, th' inhuman Minotaur o'erthrown;
And dying Centaurs seem to pant in stone.
(The obverse frieze in order spreads abroad [8]
The kindred labours of his guardian god;)

Teeming with life the figures stand sublime, [9]
As patriot emblems to the end of time.

Thus, when some future, nobler bard shall claim
The poet's wreath, and sing his country's fame;
While bright-eyed Science points to Albion's shore,
—Fair seat of liberal arts, of classic lore,—
A MARLB'ROUGH's actions shall his strain prolong,
Or EUROPE's WELLINGTON inspire his song!

TABLET,

TO THE MEMORY OF FOUR BROTHERS, (SONS OF THE REV. JOHN WEDDLE AND FRANCES MORGAN PARSONS, OF GLLANCLEWEDOG, RADNORSHIRE); WHO FELL IN THEIR COUNTRY'S SERVICE.

Inscribed to Captain G. Parsons, High Sheriff of that county.

(Amor Patriæ.)

WHEN Alba's sons refused their realm to yield,
And dared Rome's legions in the tented field,
In the 'mid space, of either band the boast,
Three Brothers issued from each well rang'd host;
In Alba's cause, the Curiatii came,
For Rome th' Horatii claimed the meed of fame.
Exulting armies looked with anxious pride,
Each prayed their gods to combat on their side.
Of Romans, two—of Albans, all were slain,
And five brave warriors stained the well-fought plain.

This sacred tablet decks with votive lays,
And gives to Albion's sons a higher praise:
From one fond sire *four valiant offspring* rose,
Hurling defiance at their country's foes;
Each, in his turn, the rage of battle dared,
And each, in turn, the death of heroes shared.
May future warriors catch this hallowed fire,
And learn, like them, for Britain to expire!
Renown like this transcends what bards have sung,
And with its glory checks the poet's tongue!

PARENTAL EPITAPH.

Mark Church, Somersetshire.

Ah! what avails, on brass or sculptured stone,
To speak of worth, or make man's merit known?
An art like this some venal scribe might claim,
And tack his tinsel round a worthless name.
By other theme a weeping son would prove
His filial reverence and perennial love!
And whilst such bard essays, with flattering pen,
To win a vain applause from vainer men,
Be this my prayer!—When thro' the vast profound
O'er waning time the last dread trump shall sound;
May then those children who rejoiced to share
Your prayers, your precepts, and protecting care,—
May they with you in happiest union meet,
Renew a converse which on earth was sweet,
And, through a Saviour's great atonement, rise
In blissful kindred to unchanging skies.

EPITAPH.

——— *Cathedral*, 1814.

TO MISS ———.

* * * * * *
* * * * * *

Is there the breast which beauty ne'er hath warmed—
Virtue hath awed, or sense resistless charmed?
Hence let him fly! nor impiously presume
Within the precincts of this sacred tomb!

And O! whilst bending with the weight of woe,
For thee our bosoms heave, our sorrows flow,
Hide in thy seraph wings that angel face,
(Now fresh illumined with immortal grace);
Chide not our tears which mourn th' afflicting rod;
Forgive the wish that holds thee from thy GOD!

MISCELLANEOUS.

Diversos diversa decent * * *
* * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * *

Læta fere lætus cecini cano tristia tristis,
Conveniens opera tempus, utrumque suo est.—*Ovid.*

ON DESPAIR.

(Written by request.)

Nay, nay, my friend, tis never true
  Thy spotless breast can feel despair!
The demon Fiend shall fly from you,
  With his black train of gloom and care.

Perhaps, indeed, some dream of youth
  Has shadowed forth a fairy *scene*,
And coloured with the hue of truth
  Some meteor ray in fancy's sheen.

The fair delusion on thy way,
  In tempting form with syren smile,
Hath lured thy feeling heart astray,
  And fed thy guileless hopes awhile.

But ah! a thousand hopes and fears
Must thus through life thy thoughts mislead,
And waken oft the flow of tears,
And often cause thy heart to bleed.

These all are common to our lot—
The fate of man who lives in woe;
The best have felt them! who has not?
The brightest eyes have learnt to flow.

But O! Despair is not for thee,
He rules alone the guilty breast;
His wing of night afar shall flee,
Nor dare thy seraph soul molest.

Nay! e'en the dazzling hues of love,
Which now, perchance, in sweetest guise,
Thy warm affections ofttimes move,
And look so tempting in thine eyes—

These hopes or fears shall bring thee peace,
When sage experience rules thy day,
And as maturer years increase,
Shall scatter sunshine on thy way.

For know! the man of wisest mind,
Who woman scans with special care,
And who amid her ranks shall find,
The painted charm, the cover'd snare,

Shall turn him from each vain deceit,
Sick of the lure which meets his sight;
Thy worth with grateful heart shall greet,
And in that sterling worth delight.

Then, dearest friend, 'tis never true,
Thy spotless breast should feel despair;
The dreaded Fiend shall fly from you,
With all his train of gloom and care.

THE REVIVAL OF HOPE.

(For the same.)

O! said I, that Hope from this breast had departed,
That its beacon was lost in Despair's gloomy night;
That Bliss had far fled, and henceforth broken-hearted,
These eyes ne'er should glisten with tears of delight?

Yes! such was my dread, as I hung on the willow,
This harp which but moan'd over joys that had flown;
And such was the pang, as I moisten'd my pillow,
And dwelt on my hope's blighted scenes with a groan.

Thrice bless'd be the morn, then, which dawns on such slumbers,
For sweet are the visions it brings on its wing,
This harp is new strung, and inspired by its numbers,
My voice gladly echoes the pulse of its string.

Thus when the storm soars through wide æther's dominion,
And round, in dread tumult, the deep thunders sound,
All nature is shadow'd beneath its black pinion,
And weeps at the ruin which rages around;

When, lo! from the East, a bright ray is seen glancing,—
The widely-spread gloom is dissolv'd at the sight,
As when over chaos was first seen advancing
That morn, which responded to "Let there be light."

Such, such is the dawn, which, all sorrow dispelling,
Spreads round at the smile of the youth whom I love;
And such is the joy, which illumines my dwelling—
A joy equalled only by seraphs above.

ON A FAN,

RETURNED TO A LADY.

Welcome, soft airs, which calm my brows,
And round my burning temples play.
As zephyrs breathe their early vows,
To wake the mellow blooms of May.

O could ye thus, with quick control,
Allay the fevers of the heart,
Or hush to peace the tortured soul,
When pain inflicts its venomed dart:

Then would I joyful bless the hand,
Which wove thy light fantastic shape,
And favour'd by thee, at command,
My friend, my comforter would make.

But ah! vain fan, such envied powers,
To mortal texture ne'er were given;
The Virtues whisper these are ours,
And such, the soothing calms of Heaven.

ON A FADED FLOWER,

WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY GIVEN BY A LADY.

Inscribed to Miss A. M. Burroughes.

Yes! thou art gone; affection's hand
Could not prolong thy transient bloom;
Nor could the skill at man's command,
Shield thy frail beauty from its doom.

Yet, to my mind, in freshest youth,
Thy form shall oft its tints renew,
Which dress'd in more than native truth,
Shall rise to my delighted view.

For thou wert once an emblem fair,
Of one whose mind is free from guile;
Thou wert an object of her care,
And caught'st a radiance from her smile.

Hadst thou been carried to her lip,
Thy tints had learnt once more to glow;
Blushing her dewy breath to sip,
And cherished at her breast of snow.

But such thy lot was, ah! denied,
Those hues are lost, thy fragrance flown;
Yet fancy still shall be the guide,
To paint the gift, this breast hath known.

For Friendship oft-times will embalm,
The boon which Friendship's hand hath given;
As oft the soul in peaceful calm,
Will hallow all that springs from Heaven.

TRIBUTE TO AFFECTION.

January 1st, 1837.

O! is there in this world a Friend,
By Providence, in mercy, given,
With whom 'tis bliss my lot to blend,
Who joins to make that lot a heaven?

And is there not a chord in life,
Which in a faithful league can bind
Our all of hope, of fear, or strife,
Which cheers, or tempts, or tries the mind?

Yes, dearest, in thine eyes I read
An answer to these questions true;
And still this trusting heart shall plead,
That Friend, that chord, is found in you.

For in my soul there's not a woe,
Which gives not to thy breast a care;
Nor can thy mind a pleasure know,
Thou would'st not call my heart to share.

Thus, thus, then through this world of ill,
Blended in spirit, hand in hand,
Let us our destiny fulfil,
And cheerful wait our God's command.

Softening each other's woes and cares,
While mutual faith each day employs;
In blended voice shall rise our prayers,
Exulting in our common joys.

TO THE SAME.

January 1st, 1838.

As the gay morning of each day
  Quickly dissolves in shades of night;
Or as the seasons roll away,
  In summer or in winter's flight:

So life progresses to its goal,
  And all our griefs and joys but tend
To point a precept to the soul:
  'Tis this—*To meet prepared its end.*

But sooth to say, the more our bliss,
  The swifter hastes our hours away,
And, with increase of woes, we miss
  The tedious moments of the day.

So, dearest, if my years fly fast,
May I not lay the blame on thee?
Though strange! for thee I'd bid them last,
Nor half so fleet in progress be.

If then these hairs be quickly snow,
I'll surely say, the fault is thine;
For, in plain truth, I'd have thee know,
Thou do'st beguile me of my time.

THE EDDYSTONE LIGHT.

How dear to the view, when the tempest is beating,
And direst dismay rides aloft on the storm;
When worn with his toil, and past hope of retreating,
The sailor sees death in its most dreaded form.

How sweet to behold, over mountains of ocean,
The Eddystone beam rising clear 'midst the night,
Whence through the waves' tumult and wildest commotion,
Its beacon of hope throws a ray on the sight.

The seaman, forgetting past danger and sorrow,
Flies, instant in thought, from the jaws of his fate,
And springs thro' the dawn of a blissful to-morrow,
To the hearth of his cot, and the arms of his mate.

O! thus, 'tis in life, when its sorrows most darken,
Those sorrows which pass mortal man's weak control;
When to Friendship's vain counsel, she ceases to hearken,
And tempests of sin fall amain on the soul.

The Saviour holds forth a bright beam of protection,
The Christian to cheer in his struggles below;
And points in his Gospel, a certain direction,
From dangers of Time, and Eternity's woe.

Tho' tumult and terror, with billows infernal,
Rise high on the soul; He commands them to cease:
And the Spirit of Love, fraught with blessings internal—
Like the Dove to its Ark, brings the message of peace.

HYMN,

WRITTEN FOR A CLERGYMAN AGED EIGHTY-SIX.

"At evening time it shall be light."—Zech. xiv. 7.

Chill was the gloom and deep the shade,
The storm thick gathering from on high,
Had thrown across the moorland glade,
And in its pall enwrap'd the sky.

Nought but the tempest raging wide
Broke the dread silence of the night;
And spreading still on every side,
Shook e'en the firmest with affright.

The traveller on the unshelter'd plain,
In vain the doubtful pathway tries;
His head is cower'd by pelting rain,
And thickest darkness veils his eyes.

But, see, at length the storm is o'er—
The lightened clouds roll fast away;
The moon, with all her silvery store,
Illume the heavens with mimic day.

To his loved hearth, with eager haste,
The wanderer plies his wearied feet,
And having 'scaped the cheerless waste,
He smiles, past dangers to repeat.

E'en thus, methinks, a dubious way,
The Christian in life's path must meet;
The sun, the storm, the night, or day,
Now animate or check his feet.

Still onward lies the course of life,
And still new joys or dangers rise,
Discord or peace, or calm or strife,
Serene, or now tempestuous skies

But as his final hour draws near,
A holy calm pervades the soul:
Alike distrust or gloomy fear,
Cease to exert their dread control.

Faith's cheering beam, athwart the gloom,
Reveals the mansion of the bless'd;
Hope, rising from the Saviour's tomb,
Points where the weary are at rest.

Led by the Spirit of his Lord,
E'en death's dark valley grows more bright;
And trusting to His promised Word,
Behold, "*At evening time 'tis light.*"

HYMN FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

"Have mercy on all Jews, Turks, Infidels, &c."—*Common Prayer.*

HEAR, gracious God, our earnest prayer,
For Abraham's bruised and abject seed;
Justly they claim our warmest care—
Adopted favourites in their stead.

Shall they, for ever, scattered wide,
Through every nation under heaven;
Rejecting Him they crucified,
Wander unpitied, unforgiven?

No! for thy Sovereign word is past—
"Mine own I will not cast away."
E'en Israel shall be saved at last;
Shall turn to Christ, and suppliant pray.

As Moses, by his God's command,
Lifted the brazen Type on high,
A refuge to the suffering band,
And the diseased forbore to die;

So shall a Saviour's refuge spread
Wide o'er the realms of death and sin;
Till Jew and Gentile bow the head,
Till every tongue confess to Him.

From the wide earth's remotest bound,
The universal song shall rise;
Through utmost space the Hymn shall sound,
And waft its echo 'midst the skies.

GRATITUDE.

Tell me why, O tell me why,
Swell these tear-drops on mine eye,
While my heart, from sorrow free,
Beats with joyous extacy?

Tell me why, O tell me why,
Heaves my breast the unchecked sigh,
While within, no earthly care,
Much less pain is rankling there?

Listen! and I'll tell thee why
Flow these tears, and whence that sigh;
Though my heart, from sorrow free,
Feels sublime felicity.

Gratitude bedims these eyes,
Gratitude impels these sighs,
Gratitude for blessings given,
Gratitude for hopes in heaven.

Unrequited, undeserved,
'Bove the race of man preferr'd,
'Bove surrounding thousands bless'd,
Gratitude excites my breast.

Gracious God, may tears arise,
Gracious God, accept my sighs,
Grateful tears for mercy's store,
Sighs that I deserve no more.

Ever in our circle here,
May warm Gratitude appear,
'Till our tongues, in realms above,
Hymn in loudest strains thy love.

HYMN FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Holy and just, Almighty Lord,
To Thee our loudest hymn we raise;
Encouraged by Thy sacred Word,
To offer up our infant praise.

To thee we owe our every good,
Each cheering bliss of life and light,
Clothing and comforts, health and food,
Our peace by day, our rest at night.

We thank Thee for the gift supreme,
That we were born in Christian land;
Where saving grace may be our theme,
And we are taught our Lord's command.

And O! we grateful bow to Thee,
For all our guardians here below;
For Thou with holy charity
Dost bid the generous bosom glow.

Grant that the seeds of heavenly truth,
Implanted in our early day,
May deck with bloom our opening youth;
In age, the richest fruits display.

HYMN.

"As many as touched Him were made whole."—Mark vi. 56.

See! toward the Saviour pressing,
Many a child of pain and woe,
Loudly craving for His blessing,
To a gracious Lord they go.

Or in town, or village walking,
Quickly in his path they bring,
Deaf or lepers, blind or halting,
Suppliant to Creation's King.

Hark! His sacred Word dispenses
Healing to the eager throng;
Devils fly the maniacs' senses—
Hymns attest the loosened tongue.

Th' unstopp'd ear, delighted, hearkens
To those shouts of joyous sound;
And the scale, like night which darkens,
Quits the eye bright beaming round.

Still the crowds, each other crushing,
Like a wide extended shoal,
In impatient ardour rushing,
Seek *the touch that makes them whole.*

Gracious Lord! we too would press Thee,
For thy favours from above;
Give us, give us, tongues to bless Thee,
Give us hearts to own thy love.

Give us spirits to adore Thee,
In devout and holy frame;
May our praises rise before Thee—
Incense worthy of Thy name.

Near the Cross, whence once Thou sheddest
Blood, all-powerful, to atone;
Trusting, where for man Thou bleddest,
See us from Thy mercy throne.

Earnest at that throne approach Thee,
Pains of body, sins of soul;
Lord, in holy faith we touch Thee,
Pardon, cleanse us, make us whole.

THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

Vide Luke vii. 11.

TO JOHN ALLEN, ESQ., BY WHOM THE SUBJECT WAS GIVEN, AND AT WHOSE REQUEST IT WAS WRITTEN, THIS POEM IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

What means yon crowd, whose slow and solemn state
Impedes the issues at the city's gate?

Hush! heard'st thou not those plaints of wail and woe,
And see'st thou not those streams which rapid flow?

And mark'st thou not that slowly moving bier,
Round which those groans ascend, and falls the tear?
Yes! 'tis the Widow's son, her only pride,
For whom those plaints ascend, and flows that tide;
And see! the mother's self, upheld by friends,
Feeble, absorbed in woe, the bier attends.

Approach, approach, observe that bloated eye,
How dim its orb, how bent on vacancy.
Yet sense is left, for now on Heaven 'tis fixed;
Now shows despair, with hopeless torture mixed;
Now on the bier its anxious beam is glanced;
Now closed its lid, with agony entranced.

Weep, weep, thou widowed one—thy cup of life
With bitterness is drugged, with woe is rife.
Well mayest thou weep, all earthly hope is fled,
Thine only solace, in that child is dead;

Nor does the pang assail thy breast alone,
A wailing kindred answer groan for groan.

But who is He, that with uplifted hand,
Stands in the act of dignified command;
(Upon whose glorious brow sits love, combined
With soft compassion for all human kind.)
What voice is that which checks the mourning throng,
In strains more grateful than a seraph's song;
Whose fiat that, at whose resistless will,
Each sigh is hushed, the solemn train is still?
What words are those which light the mourner's eyes—
"Young man, to thee I speak, I say, Arise!"
What power is that which animates yon clay,
Lifts the cold hand, gives strength, and leads the way,
Strips off the grave-clothes, and each cumbering vest,
And gives the loved one to a Parent's breast?
Say, is not this the Christ so long foretold,
By Prophet Bards, and Patriarchs of old:

Prompt to redeem, and mental bliss impart;
To heal the wounded, bind the broken heart?

Hark! the full hymn of praise in quick reply,
Tunes every tongue, and brightens every eye.

Lord of Life, our spirits bless Thee;
Lord of Power, accept our praise;
Lo! the very graves confess Thee,
Mighty from their jaws to raise.

Long-expected, long-desired,
Long-foretold by Bards inspired;
Thee we joyful hail at length,
Trav'ling in Messiah's strength.

Thou the gloom of mind canst lighten,
Earth and Hell Thy word obey;
Thou the vale of death canst brighten,
Thou to Heaven canst guide our way.

Lord of Life, our spirits bless Thee;
Lord of Power, accept our praise;
Lo! the yawning graves confess Thee,
Mighty from their jaws to raise.

NOTES ON POMPEII.

1. Amphion.

2. Orpheus.

3. " Quanquam animus meminisse horret, luctuque refuget,
Incipiam!"—*Virgil.*

4. " Nubit genero socrus nullis auspicibus—
Nullis auctoribus, funestis omnibus omnium."—
Tully, Orat.

5. This was the most solemn tie of contract.—*Kennett.*

6. The song called " The Thalasius,"—" Nulla te hodie pulchrior, &c."—*Horace.*

7. " Cinge tempora floribus suaveolentis amarici."—
Catullus, Lib. 6.

8. Flammeum Cape. " Dudum sedet illa parato, Flammeolo."—*Juv. Sat.* 10.

9. " Tunica Recta."—*Pliny, Lib.* 8, *Cap.* 48.

10. " Comat Virginias hasta recurva comas."—
Ovidi fasti, Kennett, &c.
" Hasta Cœlibaris"—" Dea Quirilis."

11. Impenetrable darkness was occasioned by the cloud of ashes, &c., &c.

12. "The irruption had an awful columnal appearance, branching at the top like a huge pine-tree."—*Pliny.*

13. The Christians were at this period increasing, and under great persecution.—A.D. 79.

14. "The fire shifted, and wavered in its hues every moment."

15. "During the irruption the earth continued to shake."—*Pliny.*

16. "And Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea-shore."—Exodus xiv. 30.

17. "Cape sacra manu."—*Virgil.*

18. "Multitudes were suffocated by the ashes, of which the discharge was so great as to occasion impenetrable darkness for three days."—*Vide History.*

19. "On whose deep stream, &c."—Vast volumes of steam went up from the mountain, which descended in torrents of rain, and washed the ashes into places where they could not have penetrated in a dry state."—*Pliny.*

20. "Vestibulum ut molli Velatum fronde Vireret."—*Cat. Lib.* 62. 293.

"Velleribus nivesi et festa fronde revinctum."—*Virgil.*

21. *Plutarch, Rom. Quæst.*

22. "Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit."—*Johnson.*

23. "Dant famuli manibus lymphas Cereremque canistris,
Expediunt, tonsisque ferunt mantelia villis."—*Virgil.*

24. " Tibi ducitur uxor,
Sparge marite nuces, &c."—*Virgil, Buc.* 8.
" Da nuces pueris————
———— Satis diu,
Lusisti nucibus."—*Catullus, Lib.* 131.

25. *Plutarch in Romul. et Rom. Quæst.* 31.

26. " ———————— Enceladi,
Fessum quoties mutat latus."—*Virg., Æn.* iii. line 578.

27. " Thus the bright arch, which bounds the earth and skies,
Allures from far, and as we follow, flies."—*Pope.*

28. " Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiæ, chief of the Campanian cities—overwhelmed 23d August, A.D. 79."

29. Apostrophe to the Temples—still prominent among the ruins.

30. " Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel."—2 Tim. i. 10.

31. Vittæ.

32. " Favete Linguis."—*Horace.*
" Nec responsa potest consultus redere vates."—*Virgil.*

33. " Vestibulum ante ipsum primoque in limine."—*Ibid.*

34. The Triclinium was frequently of a semi-circular form.
" Sterni Triclinia in foro jubebat."—*Cicero.*

35. " ———— Cithara crinitus Iopas
Personat aurata."—*Virgil.*
" ———— Vocemque per ampla volutant
Atria."—*Ibid.*

36. Kitchen, and other utensils, quite perfect.

37. "The rooms are painted with devices emblematical of their respective uses. Fish, fowl, and wine-cups, shew the Triclinium; books and writing implements, the study; stoves and couches, the chamber; glasses, combs, and pots of rouge, the toilet."—*Vide History.*

38. An allusion to the street of tombs.—*Vide History.*

39. "Postquam collapsi cineres, et flamma quievit
Relliquias vino et bibulam lavere favillam."—
Virgil, Æn. vi.

40. "And the loved ashes," &c.—

"——— with wine
They quenched the pile, throughout, leaving no part
Unvisited, on which the fire had seized.
His brothers, next, collected, and his friends
His white bones mourning, and with tears profuse
Watering their cheeks; then in a golden urn
They placed them."—*Cowper's Homer.*

41. "O terque quaterque beati, queis ante ora patrum."—
Virgil.

42. Vide History.

43. Bachannalia, or drunken feasts of Bacchus.

44. "Many skeletons were found with treasure or valuables near them. Seven were discovered; the first carrying a lamp, the rest had each something valuable between the bones of the fingers."—*Vide History.*

45. "Retains the impress," &c.—The impression of the human form in the lava is, in some instances, remarkably perfect.

46. "Still nature," &c.—Under a pure unclouded sky, nature has here lavished every luxury.

47. "The elements dissolve," &c.—"The day of the Lord will come; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works which are therein, shall be burnt up."—2 Peter iii. 10.

48. "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him who liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer."—Rev. x. 5.

NOTE ON NIOBE.

1. "Lo! the twin powers."—Apollo and Diana, twin offspring of Latona, whose rites Niobe had arrogantly despised, and who are said to have slain her children with their arrows from the tower of Cadmus.

NOTES ON THESEUS.

1. "Visions of glory."—*Gray.* Reflection on the glories of Athens—this Temple the most perfect ruin.

2. "Ye mystic groves."—The groves of Academus, frequented by Plato.

3. "As when on Marathon's," &c.—Recorded of Theseus, and believed by the Greeks.—*Plutarch.*

4. "As the skilled workman."—A comparison made by Chandler and others, on the exceeding acuteness of the edges, and the effects of the whole temple.

5. "Wraps the rich fabric," &c.—The recorded effects of the Grecian sun, compared to a vesture of gold.—*Chandler*, &c.

6. "Enormous blocks," &c.—The blocks of marble are of a size the most astonishing, and their union almost undistinguishable.

7. "Here groans the monster bull," &c.—Patriotic actions recorded of Theseus—passim.

8. "The obverse frieze."—The labours of Hercules on the other two sides or friezes.

9. "Teeming with life."—The figures are said to swell out from the building in an almost miraculous manner.

Macintosh, Printer, Great New Street, London.

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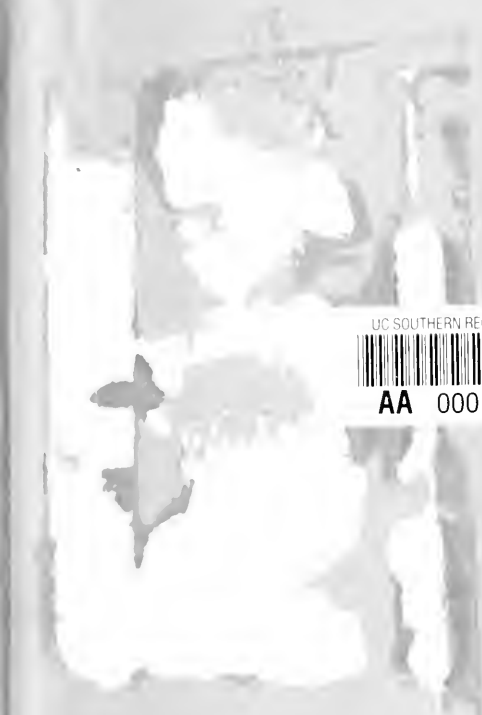

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